

A message to those at the **CROSSROADS**

*"Thus says Yahweh,
Stand you in the ways
and see, and ask for the
old paths, where is the good
way; and walk therein, and
you shall find rest for your
souls:..... Jeremiah 6:16-21*

Feikoab Parimah

Spiritual Awakening Series I

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Unless otherwise stated, all scripture quotations are from the World English Bible (WEB). All emphasis are mine.

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Contact the author via: feikoabparimah@yahoo.com

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INTRODUCTION

John Wesley once said, “a fanatic is one who seeks desired ends while ignoring the constituted means to reach those ends”. This statement is not at all different from that of Dr. G. Campbell Morgan who said, “For a people to boast in the glory of the past, and to deny the secret that made the past, is to perish”.

Why is it that the professing believer these days does not want to have anything to do with what the Apostles and early disciples went through? It is clear, if we take the path they took, we will also suffer what they suffered. This means, it will ultimately lead to the manifestation of God's power in our lives (for we are supposed to have a common faith).

This common faith was the faith of the son of God, which we are supposed to replicate in our days. Unfortunately, the professing believer of our age labels

what we are supposed to suffer for Christ as curses. We rather see those things we are expected to run away from as blessings. I believe the Lord is calling the church of today to see, and ask for the ancient paths as recorded in the book of Acts.

Its been said that, Men who have been used of God in any generation from Calvary down to this hour have not invented and preached new truths. They have simply had the anointed vision to discover truths that had been obscured by the overemphasis of certain other truths.

This book (which is first in the *spiritual awakening series*) serves as a compass for the 21st century believer to identify his state and know the way forward to true Biblical revival. It therefore serves as a general introduction to these series.

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CHAPTER ONE TO THOSE WHO WONDER

There comes a time when man is thrown into an ocean of confusion, given that, there are so many options he has to choose from. Many religious bodies have arisen in our age, all claiming to possess the path way to God. This has led to confused minds, leaving people with the question of what or who is really telling the truth. Men are running to and fro just to get solutions to their problems. Thus, resulting in many people falling prey to the whims and caprices of false Prophets, Apostles and Teachers. This situation is not different from that which prevailed in the life of the people of Israel during the days of Jeremiah. God had to intercept the course of this backslidden nation;

*"Thus says Yahweh, Stand you in the ways and see,
and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and
walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls:*

But they said, We will not walk [therein]. I set watchmen over you, [saying], Listen to the sound of the trumpet; but they said, We will not listen..."
Jeremiah 6:16-21

The Lord showed the people of Israel the way forward and their task was to seek Him. They were also to ask for the ancient paths which their fathers took in order for them to have the peace they greatly needed. Rather than heed this advice, the Israelites trampled this message from God underfoot by blatantly refusing to follow God's prescriptions. The outcome is evident in the scripture above.

The church today is asking questions as to why we are not able to experience God the way our fathers did? God is always sounding it clear that, we should follow the path the people of old took and the result will be what they experienced. Scriptures reveal to us, we are not to remove the ancient landmarks which our fathers set;

"Don't move the ancient boundary stone, which your fathers have set up. " Proverbs 22:28

There is a standard set (in the past) by our fathers and we have to continue to uphold it. We will only experience the glory of God in a measure (as) they did, and even beyond, if we also uphold such standards. How can we identify the ancient paths, so we can also take that course?

If we want to identify the ancient paths, we need to critically examine the life of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. Further, we have to study the life of the Apostles and Prophets as well as the early disciples who God used to manifest His glory. It is the example set by our Lord and the Apostles which I will endeavor to throw light on. We as Christians ought to walk as our master Jesus Christ (walked);

"he who says he remains in him ought himself also to walk just like he walked." 1 John 2:6

The Apostles and early believers followed His steps, and it resulted in them going through what they suffered as He promised. Why then seek a shortcut in your Christian journey which in truth is not just a shortcut, but the route of the devil. Christ promised, we will be hated by the world;

"Remember the word that I said to you: 'A servant is not greater than his lord. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will keep yours also.' " John 15:20

He gave us the assurance that, when it happens we should rejoice over it;

". . . Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven. For that is how they persecuted the prophets who were before you." Matthew 5:10-12

When it got to the Apostles, they were always counting it joy to suffer for Christ's sake, knowing they were appointed to suffer;

"They therefore departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for Jesus' name." Acts 5:41

Paul also reiterated this truth to Timothy and contemporary believers;

"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12

Why then is the professing believer these days shying away from what the Apostles and early disciples went through? It is clear, if we take the path they took we will also suffer what they suffered no matter the form it takes. This also means it will ultimately lead to the manifestation of God's power in our lives. After all, we are supposed to have a common faith;

"One Lord, one faith, one baptism," Ephesians 4:5

"Beloved, while I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I was constrained to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith

which was once for all delivered to the saints." Jude 3

This common faith was the faith of the son of God, which we are also supposed to replicate in our days. Unfortunately, the professing believer of our age labels what we are supposed to suffer for Christ as curses. They rather see those things they are supposed to run away from as blessings. I believe the Lord is calling the church of today (which is largely Laodicean) to see, and ask for the ancient paths as recorded primarily in the book of Acts. This is how the church in Laodicea looked like in the book of Revelation;

"...I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of my mouth. Because you say, 'I am rich, and have gotten riches, and have need of nothing;' and don't know that you are the wretched one, miserable, poor, blind, and naked..." Revelation 3:14-20

If we revisit the life of our savior and the Apostles as exhibited in the gospels, Acts and beyond, we will also experience the glory of God. It is against the back drop of the professing believer's backslidden state that the ancient paths which our fathers trod should be laid bare for the end-time pilgrim to lay hold on. The compass to help us find our way is our faith in the son of God, which the early disciples had by the spirit of Christ;

"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if it is so that the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if any man doesn't have the Spirit of Christ, he is not his."

Romans 8:9

"Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who have obtained a like precious faith with us in the righteousness of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ:" 2 Peter 1:1

I therefore endeavor to throw light on the spirit of Christ (thus, His manner of life) and the faith the Apostles and early believers had in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER TWO

THE RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

So many people desire to do the work of God, whereas they do not have knowledge about the one they want to serve. It is therefore important to note that, our knowledge of the God we serve is very vital as far as pleasing Him is concerned. We may claim to do His work but if we do not know Him, how can we gladden His heart? In our pursuit of working with and for God, we should bear in mind that knowledge of Him is very important as far as pleasing Him is concerned;

"The Spirit of Yahweh will rest on him... the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahweh." Isaiah 11:2

We are made to understand that, the spirit of God is also the spirit of knowledge. The knowledge of God is therefore very important in our walk with Him. With regards to salvation, it is significant for one to have the right knowledge of salvation. You will recognize, since a

lot of people have the wrong knowledge of salvation and God, they tend to live anyhow. God so much loved the Jews that, He sent John the Baptist to give them the right knowledge of salvation. He did this so they would not establish their own righteousness as in line with Luke 1:77;

"to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins,"

In effect, having the wrong knowledge of God is capable of spelling the doom of the professing believer. Many do not have the knowledge that, the God of love is also a consuming fire. Since many do not have much knowledge about the God they serve, they serve Him anyhow and as a consequence invite the curse of God upon their lives;

"Cursed be he who does the work of Yahweh negligently; and cursed be he who keeps back his sword from blood". Jeremiah 48:10

Many have fallen from the faith not having the right knowledge of God. For one to be able to please God and stand firm in these last days, he needs to have the knowledge of God as depicted in the scripture below;

"And wisdom and knowledge shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation: the fear of the LORD is his treasure". Isaiah 33:6 KJV

This presupposes that, knowledge is one of the tools needed by the end-time pilgrim to enable him or her stand for God. When it comes to wisdom, though it is the principal thing, its beginning is the fear of God. However, one cannot have the fear of God without possessing the knowledge of it.

Knowledge can be said to be a prefix to most of the cardinal truths of the Christian faith. To operate for example by faith, you need the knowledge of it, and the same applies to love. Christ told His disciples that they shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free.

If men had known Jesus Christ to be the messiah, they would have surrendered to His Lordship. This shows why before a man can have saving faith, he must first of all be given the knowledge of God's salvation plan.

It is imperative every professing believer or preacher have the right knowledge of God. Without the right knowledge, one could perish in ignorance. God had the following testimony against His people Israel, for their lack of knowledge of Him;

*"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.
Because you have rejected knowledge, I will also reject
you, that you may be no priest to me. . ." Hosea 4:6*

*"Therefore my people go into captivity for lack of
knowledge. . ." Isaiah 5:13*

Since Israel did not possess the right knowledge of God, they were unable to please Him. If they really knew Him, they would have followed His precepts and commands. How will we therefore know without doubt,

a person knows God? The answer is identified in the scripture below;

"This is how we know that we know him: if we keep his commandments. One who says, "I know him," and doesn't keep his commandments, is a liar, and the truth isn't in him...ought himself also to walk just like he walked." 1 John 2:3-6

Knowing God therefore goes beyond theoretical knowledge into practically obeying His commands. Israel therefore did not have the knowledge of God because they did not live in obedience, though they had the theoretical knowledge of Him. The situation of the Israelites is not different from our era, as there are a lot of institutions where we can learn about God and not live in obedience to Him. Due to this, many people do not know God and always tend to profane the holy things of God, thus inverting the truth. Christ told His disciples ahead of time about how men will persecute

them and think they are doing God a service;

"When they didn't find them, they dragged Jason and certain brothers before the rulers of the city, crying, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here also," Acts 17:6

From the above scripture we get to understand that, men who were depraved of truth began to misrepresent things. In the case of the disciples in Acts, the people thought they had turned the world upside down, though in the true sense it was upside down and they came to make it right. Paul even in his days was known as a deceiver although he was a proclaimer of the truth;

"by glory and dishonor, by evil report and good report; as deceivers, and yet true;" 2 Corinthians 6:8

In this end-time it is not uncommon to hear men misrepresent the truth. Some in their ignorance rather call those who are true, false. To know those who are true, you realize their life is in progressive consonance

with the life of Christ;

"he who says he remains in him ought himself also to walk just like he walked." 1 John 2:6

Their doctrine is also in line with godliness. Daniel foresaw there was coming a time when there would be so much deception such that only those who possessed the right knowledge of God could prevail;

"...but the people who know their God shall be strong, and do [exploits]" Daniel 11:32

Peter also added knowledge to one of the virtues which will make us established in God, so we will not fall away from the faith;

"Yes, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence; and in moral excellence, knowledge;" 2 Peter 1:5

Many have misconstrued this knowledge to be knowledge in general. Though lack of secular

knowledge can make us deficient in some areas, it is however important for us to know that God is more concerned about our souls. For this reason, He is concerned about us possessing the right kind of knowledge of Him, which will preserve our souls. One may have all the academic and technological knowledge and still go to hell. Another may or may not possess these kinds of knowledge, but with the right knowledge of God, will be able to please Him and eventually enter heaven. Thus, having secular knowledge could be beneficial in one way or the other as we sojourn in this world.

Warren W. Wiersbe has the following to say in connection with this subject matter in that, "In some respects, the world is getting better. I thank God for the advances in medicine, transportation, and communication. I can speak to more people in one radio program than the Apostles preached to in their entire lifetimes. I can write books that can be spread

abroad and even translated into different languages. In areas of scientific achievement, the world has made great progress. But the human heart is still wicked, and all of our improvements in means have not improved our lives. Medical science enables people to live longer, but there is no guarantee they will live better. Modern means of communication only enable lies to travel faster! And jet planes enable us to get to places faster, but we do not have better places to go. Man unlocks the secrets of the universe, but he does not know what to do with them. Almost everything he discovers or devises turns against him.” In simple terms, Henry David Thoreau warned that we had "improved means to unimproved ends.”

In the life of Jesus we realise that right from His infancy, He knew the father and consequently knew what He was about. When His parents were not happy with Him for not following them after the sacrifice at Jerusalem back home, He made it known to them His focus in life;

*"He said to them, "Why were you looking for me?
Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's
house?" Luke 2:49*

If many of us know about God's business, don't you think it will translate into us pursuing the agenda of our father in heaven? We will therefore get ourselves engrossed in the kingdom work directly or indirectly. This will save us from being busy with so many things which may not profit. By so doing we will know the most needful thing is the knowledge of the one we claim to serve, as Christ told Martha;

*"but one thing is needed. Mary has chosen the good
part, which will not be taken away from her."
Luke 10:42*

Christ, having the knowledge of God's will, knew it was His death on the cross which was going to bring about the redemption of mankind. When He met the woman at the well, He made it clear to her the Samaritans did

not have the right kind of knowledge of God and His salvation plan;

"You worship that which you don't know. We worship that which we know; for salvation is from the Jews." John 4:22

Jesus knew the salvation of God was first for the Jews, and then to the gentiles. Because of the deep knowledge Christ had of the father, He knew as stated earlier, it was His death on the cross which was going to reveal the glory of God. Since Peter did not have this knowledge, he rather pulled Him aside and rebuked Him;

"Peter took him aside, and began to rebuke him, saying, "Far be it from you, Lord! This will never be done to you... ". Matthew 16:22-23

What greatly aided Jesus in accomplishing His mission on earth was the knowledge He possessed. He confessed that whatever He saw the father do, was

what He did. In effect whatever He did, was by the knowledge of what the father was doing. Scripture records, He knew what to do at any given time;

"This he said to test him, for he himself knew what he would do." John 6:6

Paul knew the vital role the knowledge of God plays in a man's life and therefore always pursued it;

"that I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, becoming conformed to his death;" Philippians 3:10

Due to the depth of knowledge he had about God, he could boldly declare;

"for this cause I also suffer these things. Yet I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed to him against that day."
2 Timothy 1:12

The knowledge he had of Him caused him to see what other mortals could not see. This made his faith in God an unwavering one, knowing all things worked together for his good. Though things could not seem pleasant, he knew they were all for the glory of God;

"We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

Many men do not see the essence of suffering for the sake of Christ as a truth in itself. Paul however knew what Christ knew in this regard, as God is glorified in our suffering for His sake. This is a kind of knowledge of God which has eluded so many people as did the devil;

"Which none of the rulers of this world has known. For had they known it, they wouldn't have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 Corinthians 2:8

These days so many professing believers have misrepresented suffering for Christ, not knowing it is one of the tools God uses to perfect His saints in order to reveal His glory;

"that the proof of your faith, which is more precious than gold that perishes even though it is tested by fire, may be found to result in praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ" 1 Peter 1:7

This misrepresentation is largely attributed to the shallow knowledge many have of God. God is capable of manifesting His glory in anything on this earth no matter how we see it, be it bad or good;

"Blessed be his glorious name forever! Let the whole earth be filled with his glory! Amen and amen"
Psalms 72:19

When men have a deep knowledge of God, it will affect the way they view circumstances. There are times one

goes through an uncomfortable situation and is tempted to lose faith in God, but if only there is the right kind of knowledge, we will even glorify and praise God in whatever situation we find ourselves. God is therefore committed in this end-time to use men who have the right kind of knowledge of Him. In this end-time He is revealing Himself to those who are willing to make Him known to all men. If we continue to pray, He will give us Pastors who know Him;

*"and I will give you shepherds according to my heart,
who shall feed you with knowledge and
understanding." Jeremiah 3:15*

CHAPTER THREE

NOT MY WILL, BUT YOURS BE DONE

God is the creator of everything which exists on the face of this earth, for His own pleasure and reasons best known to Him;

"...for you created all things, and because of your desire they existed, and were created!" Revelation 4:11

He made man to understand, all He created was very good. However, He gave the following command to man in the garden of Eden;

"Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, You shall not eat of it;..." Genesis 2:16-17

Though He said all He created was good, why then did He instruct man not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and of evil? There is no doubt He had good reasons why He gave such a command. Definitely, He

would have made known to man the reason for such a command in due time. As we all know, man disobeyed and the consequence of his disobedience is evident to us all.

We are therefore supposed to learn from it so that, we will not repeat the same error. Though we are surrounded by a lot of things which really look appealing to the eyes, we are supposed to know all of them will certainly not lead to our ultimate good and that of others. However, those things may exist to reveal a purpose which is best known to God. This is why Paul gave an advice to the Corinthian church as follows;

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are profitable. "All things are lawful for me," but not all things build up." 1 Corinthians 10:23

We may have the freedom to make our choices but we should however be cautioned, there is the probability that, our will can cause our spiritual death if not aligned

with the will of God. The scriptures we have are all inspired by God and were written for our spiritual well-being;

"Every writing inspired by God {literally, God-breathed} Is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction which is in righteousness," 2 Timothy 3:16

If we do not divide the scriptures rightly, there is the tendency the same sword we have in our hand can be used to commit 'spiritual suicide'. These days, people use scriptures any how without thinking about the havoc it will cause their souls if not properly applied. We are therefore advised to;

*"Give diligence to present yourself approved by God, A workman who doesn't need to be ashamed, properly handling the Word of Truth."
2 Timothy 2:15*

Sometimes after reading worldly or secular materials we tend to imbibe every minute detail of them into our spirit. This practice is not wholesome for our spiritual prosperity. Some men fell out of the faith because they were not discerning and that is why we need to heed the advice Paul gave to the church in Thessalonica;

*"Test all things, and hold firmly that which is good."
1 Thessalonians 5:21*

In the Corinthian church, there were believers who grew weak spiritually and some even died as a result of behaving anyhow. The communion which is the very bed rock of our Christian faith, was the same communion which killed and weakened some of them. Why? Because they ate it anyhow, a behavior Paul said was not in line with discerning the body of Christ;

"For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he doesn't discern the Lord's body." 1 Corinthians 11:29

In their case, some came early and never had the patience to wait for others to come in order for them to share fellowship together. Others also did not want to eat it together with some particular group of people and there was division amongst them. What point am I trying to make here? Based on our attitudes, we can use what God has blessed and it will become a curse in our lives if not properly discerned. Going back to the Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were deceived by the devil to eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and of evil. This resulted in them dying spiritually (thus, were alienated from God in spirit). This spiritual death came as a direct result of their disobedience.

In the same way there are times God gives us specific instructions not to do certain things, but we disobey Him. This happens after the devil comes in to deceive us and we start to rationalize the commands of God for our selfish reasons. Jesus warned us about blaspheming against the Holy Spirit in Mark 3:28-29;

"...But whoever may blaspheme against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin"

Many Bible scholars view this sin as rejecting the gospel as the Holy Spirit convicts a person. Others see it as a falsification of the works of the Holy Spirit with that of the devil, and vice versa. However, there is another sin which is known as a sin which leads to death;

"If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for those who sin not leading to death..." 1 John 5:16-17

Notice from the scripture that we have a sin, not the sin. This tells us that it is indefinite and as such could be a sin committed by an individual (a thought of Professor Zacharias Tanee Fomum which I agree with). It could be, according to the mystery and command of God concerning a particular person's life, a certain sin is not

supposed to be committed. However, let us bear in mind that every unrighteousness is sin, and will be punished if not repented of and forsaken. Let us look at the example of Saul in this scripture:

"Now go and strike Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and don't spare them; but kill both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and donkey. . . Samuel said to Saul, I will not return with you; for you have rejected the word of Yahweh, and Yahweh has rejected you from being king over Israel. . . Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death; for Samuel mourned for Saul: and Yahweh grieved that he had made Saul king over Israel." 1 Samuel 15:3, 26, 35

In this case, God gave Saul a specific assignment not to spare anything in the land of the Amalekites as he goes to war against them. Remember it was an instruction issued out to him alone and not the entire nation, (though it could be argued that he received

those instructions as being the leader of Israel). The point I am however emphasizing is, so many people have committed certain sins against God which were in direct contravention with an instruction they received from God. Such instructions may not be given to everyone.

Due to this, some have died prematurely and others lost their spiritual position with God. All disobedience normally comes about when we refuse to yield our will to God. The basic concept we ought to grasp as Christians is, if we do not surrender our will totally to Christ, there is the possibility that we will commit sin. Christ made it clear to us that, we have to abandon our will for His in order to be His disciples;

"He said to all, "If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me."

Luke 9:23

In effect what Christ was teaching was, we don't have to continue to live for ourselves after we claim we have given our lives to Him. We are supposed to now live for Him and not for ourselves. If we still live for ourselves then in the first place we have not given our lives to Him. This is what Paul meant when he wrote to the church at Corinth;

"He died for all, that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who for their sakes died and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5:15

There was no way our redemption could be purchased if Christ had not obeyed the will of God. He plainly declared, His desire was to do the will of God;

"Then I said, 'Behold, I have come (in the scroll of the book it is written of me) to do your will, O God.'"
Hebrews 10:7

Even before His death on the cross, which served as the foundation for the New Covenant, He had to battle

with the will of God. Thanks be to God the will of God prevailed at long last;

"Again, a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cup can't pass away from me unless I drink it, your desire be done. . . . He left them again, went away, and prayed a third time, saying the same words." Matthew 26:42, 44

To be fruitful, there are always times we battle with the will of God for our lives. This is natural as we humans in our fallen Adamic state are predisposed to following our own will in rebellion against God. When we are born again, the Holy Spirit comes to help us yield our will to the will of God if only we corporate with Him. We should therefore pray that no matter the battle between our will and that of God, in the final analysis God's own should prevail. By this it can be said that we are living by the faith of the son of God.

It is the will of God for our lives that our souls remain in the state of sanctification;

"For this is the will of God: your sanctification, that you abstain from sexual immorality" 1 Thessalonians 4:3

But how can this be possible if we still live by our will. Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus making it known unto them that, his soul was secured in eternity. He had this assurance because he had completely abandoned his soul into the hands of God;

"For this cause I also suffer these things. Yet I am not ashamed, for I know him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that he is able to guard that which I have committed to him against that day." 2 Timothy 1:12

How on earth can a soul abandoned in the hands of God be lost? Men are only insecure about their end simply because they have not yet abandoned their will into God's hands in order to take His. Paul after he had released his will into the bosom of God, was no longer

living for himself. He was bold to declare that, he was living a crucified life;

"I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me. That life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me." Galatians 2:20

For our souls to be secured unto eternity, we need to seriously consider the choices we make as to whether they are in line with God's will for us or not. We are not to use our will to make choices based on selfish reasons. It is the will of God that our souls be secured eternally. Jesus underscored this fact when He prayed to the father in the following fashion;

"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in your name. Those whom you have given me I have kept. None of them is lost, except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." John 17:12

When Jesus knew ahead of time that, Peter was going to deny Him, He prayed for him to secure him from falling from the faith;

"but I prayed for you, that your faith wouldn't fail..." Luke 22:32

Remember I made an earlier submission to the intent that, if we want to save our lives we will lose it. Peter in his bid to save his life nearly lost it if not for the prayers Jesus made for him. When we follow the will of God for our lives, our outward man may perish whiles the inward man is being renewed;

"Therefore we don't faint, but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day." 2 Corinthians 4:16

If we understand our will is capable of either leading us to life or death, then we will make choices based on God's will for our lives. When we make our mind not to gratify the desires of the flesh, invariably we will be

A message to those at the Crossroads ||

inclined to properly divide the word of truth to God's glory.

CHAPTER FOUR

SELF-CENTREDNESS IS ALSO PRIDE

I would like to make it known that, pride is a sin which (if) not dealt with drastically, can land one into hell. Pride is one of the sins God hates most. God hates it so much that, He has declared in His word, He will resist the proud;

"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,"
Proverbs 6:16-17 KJV

"But he gives more grace. Therefore it says, "God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
James 4:6

It will do as much good if we gain an appreciation of what pride is all about, and its Genesis. Pride may come in various forms. The fact that we may not be aware of certain things in our lives which constitute

pride before God, does not change anything. We will therefore not be exonerated from its devastating consequences. Pride first surfaced in the life of Lucifer, who later on became known as Satan. The scripture below gives us an idea as to how pride manifested in Lucifer;

"How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, who laid the nations low! You said in your heart, "I will ascend into heaven! I will exalt my throne above the stars of God! I will sit on the mountain of assembly, in the far north! I will ascend above the heights of the clouds! I will make myself like the Most High! Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the pit." Isaiah 14:12-15

Lucifer tried to put himself at the center stage, and this was a direct attempt to overthrow the government and principles of the Almighty God. This should therefore sound an alarm to all of us. Whenever we put ourselves

at the center stage in people's lives, then we are indirectly overthrowing the government of God in their hearts. God is supposed to be the Lord of people's lives. We on the other hand are expected to labour to place God first in people's lives;

"Looking to Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith,..." Hebrews 12:2

These days some men make others to believe if they are not around, there is no way they can grow into Christian maturity. Their duty however is to help men know how to be connected to God and to share fellowship with His son. Paul knew this when he said;

"So then, my beloved, even as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence,..." Philippians 2:12

The leaders in the church are to help people fellowship with the father and the son. If this is not so, people will not have a consciousness of God, but will have one for

the pastor. This is clear when men do not fear God and for this reason can sin anywhere and anyhow but at the sight of the pastor they hypocritically begin to behave piously. The question you ask yourself is why are they not conscious of the Holy Spirit as He is supposed to be closer to them than their pastor? Is it possible they do not have Him in their lives? Paul knew there is the tendency for man to live in self-deception. This is why he cautioned us to work out our own salvation;

"... , work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." Philippians 2:12

At the sight of this scripture, doesn't it suggest you can do things by yourself? But wait a minute, Paul continues to say;

"For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure." Philippians 2:13

In effect, you and I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens us. We are to understand he is not

teaching us to be self-sufficient in living to please God,
but to live by the grace of God;

*"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing
Salvation to all men..." Titus 2:11-12*

In the above scripture he is teaching us to depend on
the grace of God, so that we can be empowered to live
holy lives. God must be served in His way and not ours.
The way we choose to serve God may seem right to us
but in the end will lead us to destruction;

*"There is a way which seems right to a man, but in the
end it leads to death." Proverbs 16:25*

This is the error most men have found themselves in
and are leading others into. We must not try to serve
God our own way by not depending on the grace of
God. If we do, then we are establishing our own
righteousness which is not by faith in Christ Jesus.

Living by the faith of the son of God is simply following the lifestyle of Jesus Christ. His life was a selfless devotion or sacrifice for man to be redeemed. Due to our sins, He left His throne above and came down to die a degrading death just to purchase our redemption;

"Have this in your mind, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, existing in the form of God, didn't consider equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, yes, the death of the cross." Philippians 2:5-8

It is clear for our sakes He had to deny Himself all that was dear to Him. He subsequently enjoined His disciples to do likewise;

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, just like I have loved you; that you also love one another." John 13:34

"Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:11

And we know the kind of love Christ demonstrated towards us is disinterested benevolence;

*"... But God commends his own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
"Romans 5:7-8*

Because of His unconditional love, He had to bear our iniquities though He Himself committed no sin; "For Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." 2 Corinthians 5:21

Therefore in operating by the faith of the son of God, which the Apostles did (notably Paul), we realize from their lives that, they did not live for themselves;

"He died for all, that those who live should no longer live to themselves, but to him who for their sakes died and rose again." 2 Corinthians 5:15

There is no way we can claim to be living by the faith of the son of God when we cannot deny ourselves of certain rights and privileges for the sake of others. A true disciple of Jesus is one who has first of all hated himself;

*"If anyone comes to me, and doesn't hate his own father, mother, wife, children, brothers, and sisters, Yes, and his own life also, he can't be my disciple."
Luke 14:26*

If we do not hate ourselves, there is no way we can sacrifice for others to gain salvation. Sacrifice is the very pivot on which the Christian faith hinges. There is a command for us believers to lay down our lives for others;

"By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers." 1 John 3:16

Is it possible from the scripture above, most people will burn in hell simply because they were unable to obey this part of scripture? The issue is, there is no way we can sacrifice or lay down our lives for others when we are self-centred. These days a lot of people always look out for their personal good and not that of the other party in their dealings with them. Whenever one even wants to part away with something, there are always strings attached to it. At the international level, when developed countries give aid and grants to developing countries, they attach a lot of strings, thereby controlling the economies of such nations. This should not be the case, as Christ taught us to give unconditionally, expecting nothing in return;

"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing back; and your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for he is kind toward the unthankful and evil." Luke 6:35

Paul makes us realise we should seek the good of others. For example, if you are engaged in buying and selling, your motivation should not be to sell your wares at exorbitant prices. Seeing that the high cost of goods and services (which) is not always in favour of the poor, the disciple of Christ is to sell at affordable prices for the sake of the poor. God is capable of expanding the businesses of His disciples though they don't do it with the sole motive of becoming wealthy. I am using the scripture below as a principle, and not in context;

"All things are lawful for me," but not all things are profitable. "All things are lawful for me," but not all things build up. Let no one seek his own, but each one his neighbor's good." 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

There are many Christian business men who do not pay their workers well. Some, in their bid to evade taxes, intentionally expand infrastructure with their revenue and also give a considerable portion of their

income and that of their workers as allowances. They do these knowing that assets and allowances are non-taxable. They know very well these taxes form the major internal revenue mobilisation base for the running of the economy, but because of selfishness they rather choose to amass wealth to themselves through crooked means just to be prominent. It is pride which motivates so many to love the pre-eminence over others;

"I wrote to the assembly, but Diotrefes, who loves to be first among them, doesn't accept what we say."
3 John 9

There are so many in the church of God these days who love the pre-eminence over others. This, as we can see from the above scripture, was greatly frowned upon by the Apostles. There are some who believe they are specially gifted and without them certain things cannot go on in the church of God. One truth stands in this case, thus we are not all the same, as all fingers are not

equal, but all are equally important and very much needed for the smooth running of the body. This show and desire of pre-eminence is shown in the titles we want to bear, displays on posters and banners, choice of name for ministries etc. When we indeed possess and operate by the faith of the son of God, we will labour as it lies within our power not to be known;

"For no one does anything in secret, and himself seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, reveal yourself to the world." John 7:4

Though Christ did not exalt Himself nor sought glory and applause from men, it is however important to note, God highly exalted Him;

"... Therefore God also highly exalted him, and gave to him the name which is above every name..."
Philippians 2:8-10

Christians are not to be oblivious of their roles as royal priests;

"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood. . ."
1 Peter 2:9

In the Old Testament, the priests were given the task of performing sacrifices and offering of prayers on behalf of the people. When we contrast their duties with ours, you realize ours takes a different form. We ought to emulate the example of our great high priest who is Jesus Christ. This is by living a sacrificial life and making prayers and intercessions for others;

"Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." *Romans 8:34*

From Paul's letter to Timothy, we will deduce we are to lay the burden of others and that of our nation first on our priority list. There is no way we can perform our

intercessory role if we are self-centred. These days when prayer meetings are being organised, they are normally for the purpose of personal breakthroughs and not to intercede for others. We are however supposed to be vessels meant to offer prayers on behalf of others since we are the temple of the Holy Spirit;

"I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and givings of thanks, be made for all men: . . . For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who desires all people to be saved and come to full knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:1-4

There were some individuals in the Bible who exhibited selflessness just for the sake of others. Moses, a great intercessor in the Bible never attained such a status without sacrificing the honour God wanted to give him;

"Now therefore leave me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them, and that I may consume

them; and I will make of you a great nation."

Exodus 32:10

No wonder God had the following testimony concerning him; "Now the man Moses was very humble, above all the men who were on the surface of the earth." Numbers 12:3. It therefore stands to reason that, one cannot carry out his intercessory role if he is self-centred. True Biblical revival will elude us if we do not heed the call of God;

"For thus says the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also who is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite." Isaiah 57:15

With what has been spelt out with regards to self-centredness (absence of sacrificial living), it cannot be said that we are living by the faith of the son of God, if we live for ourselves. The faith of the son of God is humility and not selfishness which is pride.

CHAPTER FIVE

TURNING STONE INTO BREAD

This chapter is to reveal the old tricks of Satan, which he uses in deceiving a lot of genuine children of God. It sometimes comes in the form of;

- “If you are a son of God, why is this or that not happening in your life?”
- “If you are a son of the God who possesses all things (the creator of silver and gold), why are you poor?”

These among others are the questions Satan poses to so many believers and professing ones alike in this end-time. Let us however be reminded that, after Jesus Christ the Son of God had finished His fast, Satan came to tempt Him with His need at the time.

There are times in our life when Satan capitalises on our perceived needs to tempt us. God is all-knowing and so knows our very need at every point in time. He

does things according to His time which is neither late nor early, but always on time. Sometimes Satan comes in a rush to bombard our minds with so many questions in a bid to sow doubt and to discredit God, supposing God is not touched by the way we feel and what we pass through in life. Brethren, let us not pay heed to Satan's voice by losing faith in God's promise of always being with us, through thick and thin even unto the end of life;

"Teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you. Behold, I am with you always, Even to the end of the age." Amen." Matthew 28:20

Please learn that, there is nothing impossible for our God. If after serving Him in spirit and in truth, He decides for the time being to withhold some things from us, then let us bear in mind that, He in His own wisdom and knowledge has His reasons. Scripture even admonishes us to be patient (endure) after we have done His will;

"For you need endurance so that, having done the will of God, you may receive the promise" Hebrews 10:36

This even presupposes that there is a gap between obedience to the will of God and the receiving of His promises. It is however unfortunate to note that many who are claiming the promises of God have not even lived in total obedience to God, not to even talk of waiting for His promises. As such they behave like the prodigal son.

Jesus, after His forty days fast, was driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil;

"for forty days, being tempted by the devil. He ate nothing in those days. Afterward, when they were completed, he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Luke 4:2-3

You will realise from the above scripture, He was driven into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. God does

not tempt man, but allows temptation to come our way in order for us to be promoted. Could it be that so many these days have failed this all important test of, “if you are the son of God turn this stone into bread”? In our case it will be rendered as, “if you are a son of God, turn this stone into bread”. Satan decided to capitalise on the need at that hour in Christ's life to tempt Him. Our saviour who knew the word (humanly speaking), was able to overcome Satan's craftiness. In this era, many have fallen prey to this diabolical question of the evil one. In our times of need, sometimes Satan knocks at the door of our hearts and says, “if you are a son of God, why are you still suffering?”, and immediately follows it up with a lot of scriptures to help us come out of the situation though it may be the will of God for us to pass through it (the trial of our faith).

Then, let us beware we do not manipulate scriptures just for the need of the hour. It could be, our faith is being tried. Please take note, manipulating scriptures

to suit and claim things to satisfy our carnal desires may not necessarily be the exhibition of true faith, but a mere manifestation of the corrupt tendencies of our hearts. Even Gideon was one time in his life tempted to ask;

"Oh, my lord, if Yahweh is with us, why then has all this happened to us? and where are all his wondrous works which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not Yahweh bring us up from Egypt? but now Yahweh has cast us off, and delivered us into the hand of Midian." Judges 6:12-13

Let us know clearly that, true faith is the assurance we have in God's word concerning all He Has promised according to His will for us, as we commit all our cares unto Him. True faith of course has patience and love attached to it.

There are times the children of God claim the promises of God out of context. Also, some who are not the

legitimate children of God may ask and be given their request as in the case of the woman and her demonized daughter;

"...But he answered, "It is not appropriate to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." But she said, "Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." Then Jesus answered her, "Woman, great is your faith! Be it done to you even as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that hour." Matthew 15:22-28

Please note from the above scenario that, it was not the woman's standing with God which qualified her for the miracle, but her faith. We can therefore pick a cue from this, that a man's faith may aid him to get some wondrous things done on his behalf though he may not have a right standing with God. As mentioned earlier, the children of God could also ask God out of context (thus, claiming the promises of God out of due season).

God may grant such a request, but it will not lead to our ultimate good;

"He said, 'A certain man had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me my share of your property.' He divided his livelihood between them. Not many days after, the younger son gathered all of this together and traveled into a far country. There he wasted his property with riotous living. . . . He said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.' " Luke 15:11-13, 17-18, 24, 31

From the parable of the prodigal son, you realize the youngest demanded for his portion, of which his father granted. There was certainly going to be an appropriate time when the father would have released His possessions to them. The fact that they were in their father's estate (kingdom) meant they possessed what their father owned. You may be a child of God and be truly rich before God, but men will not see it. There is

surely coming a day for your glorification and you need to patiently wait for it after you have done His will. It is rather unfortunate that most professing believers do not want to look like our saviour Jesus at all by possessing His spirit (way and manner of life). When the youngest son received his portion of inheritance before the due season, it was evident what he used it for and the damage it caused his life. It was only the grace of God which located him and brought him back home. He would have been better off if he had quietly remained in his father's estate and lived on the daily provisions he received.

Some people's relationship with God would have been better off if they only remained in the kingdom and shared what they had with fellow brethren and servants. What normally draws people away from His presence are the material things they claim by faith to flaunt about to prove they are the children of God.

Why are so many people's faith only used in claiming material things? These fall into the category of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life which is the manifestation of the spirit of the world. One may be operating by the spirit of the world without really knowing. Paul makes us understand in his letter to the believers at Corinth that, there is the possibility of an individual receiving the spirit of the world and not the Spirit of Christ.

"But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, . . ." 1 Corinthians 2:12

"Don't love the world, neither the things that are in the world. If anyone loves the world, the Father's love isn't in him... The world is passing away with its lusts, but he who does God's will remains forever." 1 John 2:15-17

All of us in one way or the other use this world's goods, but the pursuance of this world's goods with love (for whatever we love is always on top of our priority list) is

what God frowns upon. We as children of God should never make worldly riches our main goal in life under the pretence of getting rich to support the gospel. That is not to say that we don't need money to carry out the 'gospel assignment'. It is the blessing of God which makes us rich without sorrow. We should not desire to be rich at all cost, by causing many to sorrow through cheating and other diabolic means. In the end we will only be piercing our own selves with many sorrows;

"For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some have been led astray from the faith in their greed, and have pierced themselves through with many sorrows." 1 Timothy 6:10

It is the desire of God that the work of our hands prospers: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be healthy, even as your soul prospers"³ John 2. We are to work in order to get substance to help others and ourselves; "and that you make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, and to do your own

business, and to work with your own hands, even as we charged you; that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and may have need of nothing.” 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, not because we want to be rich.

If we truly trust and have faith in God with regards to His ability to supply our needs, then why do we have to store against the years ahead. It is evident we are living in insecurity no matter the coat of wisdom we put on it. May the good Lord help all of us to live by the faith of the son of God. There are so many definitions and types of faith men have talked about as enshrined in the scriptures. I am however dwelling on the faith the son of God had. Paul also had this faith;

"I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me. That life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me."
Galatians 2:20

At this point it is important for us to recognize that, the same kind of faith Christ had which manifested in His lifestyle is the same Paul and our fathers possessed. Let us look at the faith of some of them in the scriptures;

"By faith, Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he had testimony given to him that he was righteous, God testifying with respect to his gifts; and through it he, being dead, still speaks." Hebrews 11:4

Abel's faith caused him to offer a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. Let us frankly ask ourselves, has the faith we claim to have helped us in offering excellent sacrifices to God or helped us in living right with God?

"By faith, Enoch was taken away, so that he wouldn't see death, and he was not found, because God translated him. For he has had testimony given to him that before his translation he had been well pleasing to God" Hebrews 11:5

Has our faith caused us to do the things which are pleasing in the sight of God and not a mere show before men to gain their approval?

*"Without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to him, for he who comes to God must believe that he exists, and that he is a rewarder of those who seek him."
Hebrews 11:6*

What is your attitude toward serving God? Are you among the group who serve God anyhow? Does your faith really propel you to serve God with all diligence? These are issues we need to take a deep reflection on.

By faith, Noah, being warned about things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith." Hebrews 11:7

Has your faith caused you to fear God and to obey the great commission? Do you feel compassion for the lost

seeing the impending doom of their souls in hell fire if they fail to repent?

"By faith, Abraham, when he was called, obeyed to go out to the place which he was to receive for an inheritance. He went out, not knowing where he went. By faith, he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents, with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise. For he looked for the city which has the foundations, whose builder and maker is God. . . ." Hebrews 11:8-10, 17-19

Do you always want to know the outcome of things when God is leading you before you obey His voice? Are you living as a pilgrim on this earth in spite of the riches God has given you? Doesn't your empire suggest to unbelievers that you are not yet prepared to leave this earth?

"By faith, even Sarah herself received power to conceive, and she bore a child when she was past age,

since she counted him faithful who had promised."

Hebrews 11:11

Do you believe the voice of God that you can witness while you feel incompetent to do so and in spite of your human frailty you can be holy without blame?

"By faith, Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,"

Hebrews 11:24

Has your faith generated enough love for Christ in you to the point where you count all things which were gain to you but loss? "However, what things were gain to me, these have I counted loss for Christ." Philippians 3:7. Are you prepared to suffer affliction for the sake of Christ as well as suffer shame for Him? It is interesting to know most faith professing believers and preachers make it plain, they cannot suffer for the sake of being Christians even in the face of the above scripture and the following;

"Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution." 2 Timothy 3:12

It is therefore not a wonder that most people are not living godly in Christ Jesus. If they live godly, then the above scriptures will apply to them.

"Who, through faith subdued kingdoms, worked out righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions," Hebrews 11:33

Has your faith empowered you to take territories for Christ? Has it caused you to shine forth as light in these dark times to expose evil by way of righteous living and continual dedication to the cause of God like Daniel?

"Women received their dead by resurrection. Others were tortured, not accepting their deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Others were tried by mocking and scourging, yes, moreover by bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned. They were sawn apart. They were tempted. They were slain

with the sword. They went around in sheep skins and in goat skins; being destitute, afflicted, ill-treated (of whom the world was not worthy), wandering in deserts, mountains, caves, and the holes of the earth. These all, having had testimony given to them through their faith, didn't receive the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, so that apart from us they should not be made perfect."
Hebrews 11:35-40

Has your faith fortified you enough to the level that you cannot deny Christ in the full glaring face of adversity and persecution? You see, for all that these people suffered for God, they did not immediately receive the promise of God (the Holy Spirit), even declaring plainly by way of life and professing they were only pilgrims on this earth;

"These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them and embraced them

from afar, and having confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. If indeed they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had enough time to return. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed of them, to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them." Hebrews 11:13-16

To reveal our concept of faith, you will realise as enumerated in some statements earlier that, most of the requests made by 'faith professing' believers are mostly material in nature or for selfish reasons. God, according to His word, always made it plain we should ask of things which were of eternal value (we are however left with the choice of material things, which in most cases He rather adds to us according to our need).

Most of the time the Lord does not want us to focus on the material to the detriment of the Spirit (though He knows we need some material provisions for sustenance as human beings). To help us remain focused therefore, He advises us to seek the kingdom first. In principle "... the Kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit." Romans 14:17. In addition, we are to seek its righteousness, and the material things we need will be added to us. He makes it emphatic that, it is only unbelievers who pursue these material things to the neglect of the spirit;

"For the Gentiles seek after all these things, for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things." Matthew 6:32

Consequently, in asking from God, we have to be sure it is in line with His will. A question will however arise as to what principally is the will of God? The Lord

makes it plain that, when we ask according to His will, He will hear and answer us by granting our request;

"This is the boldness which we have toward him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he listens to us. And if we know that he listens to us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions which we have asked of him. If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for those who sin not leading to death. There is a sin leading to death. I don't say that he should make a request concerning this." 1 John 5:14-16

Note from the above verses that, if we ask anything according to His will He hears. Immediately after the verse 14 and 15, He quickly teaches us what to ask in the verse 16 which is spiritual. The will of God for that matter is, He does not want men to perish, but that all men if possible come to the knowledge of the truth. In effect whatever we ask in faith which will in one way or

the other lead to the salvation of souls, will be honoured by God. This understanding will be in direct agreement with Matthew 6:33.

How often do some men ask for the infilling of the Holy Spirit and the general outpouring of the Holy Spirit for revival? It is true that in the first place they are destitute of true faith. True faith comes out of Holy Spirit filled vessels and these vessels in turn ask for the outpouring of the Spirit for revival.

When this is born out of faith, true revival will come unto us. May the Lord grant us true faith to ask for the need of the hour .

Even the model prayer given to the disciples by Christ reveals the truth that, spiritual matters are of uttermost importance;

"He said to them, "When you pray, say, 'Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come. May your will be done on Earth, as

*it is in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive
everyone who is indebted to us. Bring us not into
temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."
Luke 11:2-4*

The only thing material which we were to ask in prayer is our daily bread. Whether it is fresh rhema or physical food, we are to ask for each day's provision. Let us bear in mind that this petition is to meet a basic need of survival. These are therefore guidelines to aid us know how to tailor our prayers. This greatly influenced the prayer life of the early disciples.

There are times we receive certain provisions from God though we have not petitioned Him concerning them. He does this to surprise us as a loving father. If He therefore withholds something from us, it is certainly for our good and we must take it as such;

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28

In effect, when asking according to His will, which is to see all mankind saved, we are to pay heed to Psalm 2:8;

"Ask of me, and I will give the nations for your inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for your possession."

In the light of the above scripture, why use our faith to claim unnecessary things and to manipulate the word of God to suit our unwarranted wants? We can however exercise our faith to the saving of the souls of mankind which is of uttermost importance. Asking for the constituted means to this great end is also in the will of God. This was the reason for the manifestation of the son of God whose faith we claim to have. If we claim to have the same faith and Spirit of the son of God, then

let us not be deceived by Satan to manipulate the word of God for our selfish advantage. Paul said;

"For I have no one else like-minded, who will truly care about you. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ." Philippians 2:20-21

Though Christ did not turn stone into bread in the face of hunger and temptation, yet He did not die. No matter the need, be it emotional or physical, God is not to an extent going to allow us to die in it. If He chooses otherwise, glory be to His name. Please, let us not turn stone into bread.

CHAPTER SIX

ARE YOU REIGNING WITH CHRIST?

How unfortunate many are deceiving themselves that they are reigning with Christ. They often quote the following scripture to support their claim;

"and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,"
Ephesians 2:6

Why claim this scripture when your life is in rebellion against the one you claim to be seated with. A look around at most of the people who profess this scripture reveals they have not yet contacted the King of kings and the Lord of lords. When we revisit the scriptures, we will see the picture of who is really in touch with Christ. God had to use Jeremiah to call back the people of Israel from their backslidden state;

"Thus says Yahweh, Stand you in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way; and

walk therein, and you shall find rest for your souls: but they said, We will not walk [therein]."
Jeremiah 6:16

Against the back drop of the above scripture, we are (as a matter of urgency) revisiting the Christianity of our fathers to ascertain whether what they had is the same as ours. If we find out ours is just a profession, then repentance will be greatly needed in this hour. We will first of all visit 1 John, which touches on the fundamentals of our faith. It is interesting to make out what the writer of 1 John states;

"This is the message which we have heard from him and announce to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and don't tell the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin."
1 John 1:5-7

It is evident, God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to be children of light, then why walk in darkness? Remember we are being called out of darkness into light;

"...that you may proclaim the excellence of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light:"

1 Peter 2:9

Therefore if we claim to be in the light and are still partaking in the unfruitful works of darkness, then we should not lie against the truth;

"If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and don't tell the truth" 1 John 1:6

The writer of 1 John brings to the fore that, even if we hate our brother, we are walking in darkness;

"...But he who hates his brother is in the darkness, and walks in the darkness, and doesn't know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes"

1 John 2:9-11

We are rather supposed to expose darkness as we introduce light into our environment;

"... Walk as children of light, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, proving what is well pleasing to the Lord. Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them." Ephesians 5:8-11

Christ commanded that we should cause our light to shine in this dark world;

"... Let your light shine before men..." Matthew 5:16

As did Paul to the Philippian church; "that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you are seen as lights in the world," Philippians 2:15

The question then is, can one claim to be reigning with Christ if his life is still lived in the dark? Why are there so many dark corners in our hearts? Why do we have a lot

of secrets which when revealed to the entire world we will feel ashamed of? The answer is obvious, hypocrisy has so much engulfed and gripped many hearts at our places of worship.

How I wish I knew certain truths in the word of God from the onset as a born again believer. I, as a person, never knew agape love (disinterested benevolence) is a direct command from our Lord which needs to be obeyed. Most at times we are taught we need to mature before we can manifest this kind of love. I am not suggesting we don't grow in love, but the motivation of our actions must be agape love. Agape love is a foundational teaching we all have to receive so we can live lives pleasing in the sight of God. This is the kind of love which Christ demonstrated towards us;

"This is my commandment, that you love one another, even as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends." John 15:12-13

As such He wants us to also from the onset manifest it towards one another. The devil has deceived so many into believing that one cannot use his or her will to manifest this kind of love with the help of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Our fathers even taught that this kind of love is supposed to be automatic in a believer;

"But concerning brotherly love, you have no need that one write to you. For you yourselves are taught by God to love one another." 1Thessalonians 4:9

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God, and knows God. He who doesn't love doesn't know God, for God is love... Beloved, if God loved us in this way, we also ought to love one another." 1 John 4:7-8,11

Therefore if one does not practice or have agape love as a motivation for his or her actions, then he is not a child of God. This is consistent with scripture;

"In this the children of God are revealed, and the children of the devil. Whoever doesn't do righteousness is not of God, neither is he who doesn't love his brother. . . ." 1 John 3:10-11

All who hitherto had been manifesting otherwise were actually sinning against God by loving conditionally. Please assess yourself right now whether the love you show towards your brethren is agape or not. Are you sure there are no strings attached to the favors you give people? Judge for yourself with the aid of the following scripture;

"By this we know love, because he laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But whoever has the world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and closes his heart of compassion against him, how does the love of God remain in him? My little children, let's not love in word only, neither with the tongue only, but in deed and truth. . . ." 1 John 3:16-21

The writer further went on to make us understand that, if we call ourselves children of God, then we ought to obey this commandment which to a true believer is not grievous. Does the command of God seem too grievous for you? Or do you obey them with gladness, knowing it is because of His love for you that He gave them to you?;

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. His commandments are not grievous." 1 John 5:3

If we indeed claim to be Christians then we must progressively walk the same way Christ did when He was on earth;

"He who says he remains in him ought himself also to walk just like he walked." 1 John 2:6

If we do not walk the same way He did, then we will be deceiving ourselves into thinking we are reigning with Him. It is written;

"Do two walk together, unless they have agreed?"

Amos 3:3

Clearly, Christ will not reign with rebels or people who walk contrary to His word. If Christ is the Lord of our life, then our life will be in agreement with His. It is as simple as that;

"To whom God was pleased to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory;"

Colossians 1:27

There are so many believers and even preachers whose lives and messages do not conform to that of Christ, but yet they still claim they are reigning with Him. Wherever they got this assurance from, is not certain. I believe it is definitely not from the scriptures God gave us and thus they are only living in self-deception. At this point it will be very beneficial to personally go through some of the teachings of Christ just to refresh your

memory and check if what is being practiced by many Christians is in agreement with it. When you assess so many people by the teachings of Christ it will be clear they are majoring on the minors and minoring on the majors.

Earlier I mentioned that there is no way it can be said we are reigning with Him when we are living against His will. It is important for us to recognize that, all Christ did was in line with the fathers will;

"...because I don't seek my own will, but the will of my Father who sent me." John 5:30

No wonder He was able to subdue the works of darkness having loved what the father delighted. This qualified Him to enter a realm from which He operated. Though He was on earth, He was operating heaven on earth upon obeying 2 Corinthians 10:6 (in principle);

"and being in readiness to avenge all disobedience, when your obedience will be made full."

There are so many who claim to have dominion over the devil, implying they are reigning with Christ, whereas they cannot stop lusting, gossiping, backbiting, envying, being proud, etc. which are character traits influenced by comparatively lesser demons. How are they therefore reigning with all the spirit of the world already seated in their hearts? Simply, many are living in self-deception;

*"But we received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that were freely given to us by God."
1 Corinthians 2:12*

Before I continue, let me just touch on the claim of many that, they are descendants of Abraham and as such are legitimate heirs to his blessings. First of all let us look at the assertion by many that the blessings of Abraham are financial riches.

The blessing of Abraham which was to come to us the gentiles is this;

"that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Christ Jesus; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."
Galatians 3:14

It is salvation through Christ which gives us access to receive the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit and all the grace of God. Financial riches are just a small fraction of it which has been blown beyond proportion by some men as constituting the blessings of Abraham;

"constant friction of people of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. Withdraw yourself from such."
1 Timothy 6:5

I stand to be corrected on this point, is there somewhere in the New Testament where Christ or the Apostles equated blessings solely with financial riches?

Most men of God in both the Old and New Testament were never pursuing financial gains nor enjoyed financial affluence. By this, I am not condemning financial blessings.

These days so many people whose life never even match the men of old rather think it is a must they have to be financially endowed. They will often quote 3 John 1-3 to support their claim;

"The elder to Gaius the beloved, whom I love in truth. Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be healthy, even as your soul prospers. For I rejoiced greatly, when brothers came and testified about your truth, even as you walk in truth."

But wait a minute, look at the man whose name is mentioned and the role he was playing in the life of the Apostles and disciples. Please judge for yourselves if any man of God will not wish what the writer of 1 John wished for Gaius. The prayer was specific because of

the faith of this disciple of Christ. We are to please God and rely on His supply as we work to His glory. There are so many men who go all length to be able to prove that a believer has to be financially endowed. They have to sometimes be economical with truth and thus fall into the temptation of profane Esau;

"lest there be any sexually immoral person, or profane person, like Esau, who sold his birthright for one meal." Hebrews 12:16

When you look at even the wealthy men of old, you realize they were first godly. The way they used their wealth tells you of the era in which they lived and as such they had no command to take the gospel to the ends of the world. For us who have this urgent command, it is almost impossible for a true disciple of Christ to live in unreasonable luxury in the name of proving he or she is blessed of God. This kind of behavior actually attracts the curse of God;

""But God said to him, 'You foolish one, tonight your soul is required of you. The things which you have prepared--whose will they be?' Luke 12:20

The blessing of God goes beyond this way of viewing our call. Though Abraham who is the father of the faithful was wealthy, let us look at the way he lived his life;

By faith, he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a land not his own, dwelling in tents,...
Hebrews 11:9-10, 13-16

No wonder the faith of Christ and the Apostles was a common one. They all focused on the kingdom of God and not on earthly gains. We as pilgrims are therefore advised to do likewise as enshrined in Paul's letter to the church of Colossae;

"If then you were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that

are above, not on the things that are on the earth."

Colossians 3:1-2

This I believe should be one of the most important guiding scriptures for us Christian pilgrims on this earth. We do not need to allow our hearts to be misguided, but need to make the following, our prayer;

"May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patience of Christ."

2 Thessalonians 3:5

As Christians we are called to be soldiers on this earth. And as soldiers we need not be entangled with civilian affairs;

"No soldier on duty entangles himself in the affairs of life, that he may please him who enrolled him as a soldier." *2 Tim 2:4*

We are in the world but not of the world as scriptures declare. If we therefore claim to be seated with Christ, what should then be our role if not to intercede for the

souls of men as He is doing?

"Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, yes rather, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us." Romans 8:34

In 1 Peter 2:9 we are called for this purpose as priest and therefore have to perform our duties as such. Jesus gave us the hint that our bodies are supposed to be used as instruments of prayer;

"saying to them, "It is written, 'My house is a house of prayer, but you have made it a 'den of robbers'!" Luke 19:46

Paul also reiterated this truth to us, to give ourselves to intercession as well as prayer; "I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: ...who desires all people to be saved and come to full knowledge of the truth." 1 Timothy 2:1-4

"Pray without ceasing." 1Thessalonians 5:17

Let us bear in mind the intercessory role which Christ is now playing, was not attained on a silver platter but was gotten through sacrifice and humility;

"but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself, . . . Therefore God also highly exalted him. . . ." Philippians 2:7-10

If many therefore claim to be seated with Him, then they must take the scripture below very seriously;

"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:" 2 Timothy 2:11-12 KJV

Let us awake to the call to live by the faith of the son of God which our fathers had, if we are not yet operating by it. The next book in this series is '**Waxing Strong in Spirit**'. God bless you as you continue to read our



materials. Amen.

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR CHRIST'S SECOND COMING?

Please note that...

The first Adam disobeyed God and because of his disobedience sin entered the human race, resulting in the spiritual death and separation of man from God; “Therefore, as sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin; and so death passed to all men, because all sinned...So then as through one trespass, all men were condemned; even so through one act of righteousness, all men were justified to life.” Romans 5:12-13, 18.

The last Adam (Jesus Christ) obeyed God in order to take away sin from the human race; “But God commends His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Romans 5:8.

Your part of the arrangement is to receive the grace or free gift of God's salvation by faith (Romans 4:16-17).

You must understand that faith without works is dead, so God expects you to obey and receive this free (but costly) gift of salvation with your free will; “But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become God's children, to those who believe in his name: who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12-13.

The most important decision you have to make now is to be born again (John3:1-8). Being born again is to repent of your sins and to submit yourself to be baptized by immersion (and not by sprinkling) as well as receive the Holy Spirit; “Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38.

The grace of God is not a license for you to live in sin, but rather to receive strength to live in obedience to God's word (Titus 2:11-14).

You therefore have to (as a matter of necessity) live a holy life and walk as Christ did, and not live in hypocrisy; “However God's firm foundation stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His, and, "Let everyone who names the name of the Lord depart from unrighteousness."2 Timothy 2:19. “Everyone who has this hope set on Him purifies himself, even as He is pure.” 1John 3:3.

If you walk in the light of the above scriptures and make 2 Peter 1:2-10 your guiding principle, you will never live a defeated Christian life, thereby ensuring that you be found in Christ even at His glorious appearing.

I caution that, you beware of people who preach Another Gospel, Another Jesus and Another Spirit as in line with 2 Corinthians 11:1-4.

For more information, please contact us via the following address:

Revealed Oracles of God
P. O. Box WY 423, Kwabenya
Accra, Ghana-West Africa.
+233 242 118 395 / +233 233 118 400 /
+233 233 118 401
revealedoracles@yahoo.com

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AMESSAGE TO THOSE AT THE CROSSROADS

WAXING STRONG IN SPIRIT

BROKEN VESSELS

BREAD BAKED IN HELL

AWAKE, AND CHRIST WILL GIVE YOU LIGHT

THE CRY OF APOSTLES AND PROPHETS

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CHRISTIAN MODESTY

GOLDEN DISTINCTIONS OF END-TIME SAINTS

IMPORTANT SIGN POSTS FOR BELIEVERS

THE REALM OF DIVINITY, CONTRADICTING THE
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THE PARADOX OF MATURITY

DEMYSTIFYING PARABLES AND SACRIFICE